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Pretense, Staging, Expediency: the Solutions That Implode the Whole Shebang

The Illusion of Stability

Slapdash quick fixes and superficial policies share one defining characteristic: they eventually lead to the collapse of the entire system. This process often begins with optics designed to mask failure. For instance, a failing business or a couple facing divorce may maintain a public facade of success and harmony to avoid the discomfort of explaining their decline.

To delay an inevitable reckoning, various expediencies are deployed. These may include:

- Borrowing money through off-the-books loans.
- Burying financial defaults.
- Raiding long-term savings, such as a child’s college fund.
- Making promises that cannot be fulfilled.

These entities carefully stage their environment to maintain the illusion that all is well. A failing household might keep its yard meticulously tidy, or explain away an inability to pay university tuition as a strategic gap year intended to bolster a child's career.

Scale-Invariant Deception

The year 2026 represents a point where these layered "solutions" of pretense and staging are expected to implode across all levels of society, from individual households and private enterprises to local and national governments. The tactics of cooking books, staging appearances, and hiding debt are scale-invariant, meaning they are

utilized by state and national actors just as frequently as by bankrupt households.

The primary difference lies in the depth of deviousness and the volume of resources available. Larger organizations have the capacity to throw significant capital into maintaining these facades. A notable example is found in the banking sector, where banks may extend new loans to defaulting borrowers specifically to enable minimal payments. This expediency allows the bank to keep a non-performing loan on its books as an asset in good standing, further delaying the realization of loss.

The Role of Gamed Statistics and Facades

To support these illusions, conventional economists are often commissioned to generate gamed statistics and bogus projections. These intellectual products serve as eye-catching facades that hide a systemic rotting that precedes a total collapse.

These methods fail because they are not actual solutions. Because there is rarely a long-term plan to address the dire consequences of previous failures, pretense and staging are used alongside increasingly destabilizing expediencies to mask the unintended outcomes of prior quick fixes.

The Complexity of Systemic Effects

Policies promoted as solutions are often merely expediencies that fail to consider long-term impact. In a complex system, the first-order effects of a policy are difficult enough to predict. However, the second-order effects—the consequences that generate their own subsequent sets of consequences—unfold over time and are nearly impossible to fully anticipate.

Narrative Control and the Shadow Banking System

One popular but ultimately self-defeating tactic is the use of semantic and narrative control. This involves rebranding risky financial structures to make them appear more stable. For example, referring to a risk-choked Shadow Banking System as "private credit" does not change the fact that it remains a house of cards susceptible to implosion.

Ultimately, these staged solutions cannot prevent a reckoning; they only ensure that when the implosion occurs, it is far more reaching.

To understand the danger of these "solutions," consider a homeowner who notices a massive crack in the foundation of their house. Instead of hiring a structural engineer to fix the core issue, they simply hang a large, beautiful tapestry over the crack and tell the neighbors they are "redecorating." While the house looks perfect from the outside for a time, the foundation continues to rot unseen until the entire structure eventually gives way, tapestry and all.